certain countries which issued advisories. There was an advisory issued when Mumbai had an excessive rainfall and some manholes were uncovered. At that time, there were advisories issued not to visit. In recent days, some strict advisories have been issued. We have already taken strong steps. The Secretary, Tourism wrote to the Foreign Secretary who, in turn, wrote to our missions abroad to take up with their respective Governments that India is a safe place. The distance from Mumbai to Kerala is much more than it is from Spain to Portugal or any other countries of Europe. And, these have been downsized. The advisories have been downscaled. I am hopeful that we will soon get rid of these.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Proposal for development of tourism in Kerala

*205.SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposals for tourism development have been received from the State of Kerala;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals received along with the funds required;

(c) whether necessary clearances have been granted to the projects submitted by the State;

(d) if so, the details of the projects clearance granted and the projects still pending for clearance; and

(e) the funds so far released against each project?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) The development and promotion of places of tourist interest is undertaken primarily by the State Governments themselves. However, Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project prioritised in consultation with the State Governments every year under various schemes. The project proposals which are complete as per guidelines are appraised on the basis of inter-se-priority and funds are released, subject to availability under the respective head.

The following project proposals have been received from the Government of Kerala:

Sr.No.	Name of the project
1	2
1.	CFA for developing IT based tourism projects under the scheme of Information Technology in Kerala
2.	Destination development of Kalamandalam in Kerala
3.	Malabar Mangrove Eco-tourism circuit in Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargode District, Kerala

1	2
4.	Development of Ashtamudi Lake Cruise circuit in Kerala
5.	Development of Kuttichira Heritage township in Kozhikode as a major tourist destination
6.	Development of major tourism destination at Kollam providing entertainment and children's traffic park at Ashramam
7.	Developing IT based tourism project for Kerala
8.	Integrated destination development of Alappuzha Heritage city construction of town square

Out of these the following projects have so far been sanctioned during 2008-09 for development of tourism in the State of Kerala

(Rs.in lakh)

Sr. No.	Name of the project	Amount sanctioned	Amount Released
1.	CFA for developing IT based tourism projects under the scheme of Information Technology	27.50	24.75
2.	Destination development of Kalamandalam in Kerala	207.36	155.52
3.	Malabar Mangrove Eco-tourism circuit in Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargode District	349.36	279.49
4.	Development of Ashtamudi Lake Cruise circuit	538.00	430.40
	TOTAL :	1122.22	890.16

In addition to the above a project proposal for Development of Tourism Infrastructure in Willingdon Island Cochin Port has been received from the Cochin Port Trust under the scheme of Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development and has been sanctioned for Rs. 1450.00 lakh with the release of Rs.725.00 lakh.

Heritage status to Varanasi ghats and Sarnath Bodh Stupas

†*206. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to include 'ghats' of Varanasi and Bodh Stupa situated at Sarnath in the heritage sites; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the actions taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The ghats at Varanasi are not centrally protected. The old ghats at Varanasi are maintained by the Varanasi Municipal Corporation. The ancient Buddhist site at Sarnath has been declared as of national importance under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites & Remains Act, 1958. It is maintained and conserved by the Archaeological Survey of India.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi